From: Jim Keller
To: Microsoft ATR
Date: 1/22/02 4:27pm
Subject: Tougher penalities needed for MS

Dear Sir:

There is nothing new in Microsoft's behavior -- their predation dates back to before the first finding against them.

They showed their stripes back when WordPerfect, the #1 word processor by far (and still arguably technically head and shoulders above MS Word even today) was trying to make the transition from DOS to Windows, and Microsoft was making noises about positive "co-opetition" with other vendors of word processors, spread sheets, etc.

But WordPerfect was having tremendous problems, continually falling behind schedule because of conflicts with calls to the Windows OS that kept making the program crash. According to Info World insider article I read at the time, the internal slogan of the Windows programming team was "The Code's Not Done 'Til WordPerfect won't run."

In other words, so much for the "Chinese Wall" between MS Program and Operating System teams. Even if they weren't trying to help their own programmers (which I'm sure they were); and even if the programmers weren't exploiting undocumented API's in programming MS's own applications (they were, and it's said, still are), it was still a joke because the OS team could sabotage the Independent Software Vendors (like W.Perfect) through making the API a moving target, and taking their time in informing the ISV (or possibly misinforming them).

Further, with all their holdings and activities now, they can leverage this kind of behavior much further than back at that time.

If this slap on the wrist is all MS gets after all of their anti-competitive activities, this Justice Department will be immortalized for its total failure to protect the whole American economy from one of the least responsible corporations of all time. I suggest watching the original Roller Ball movie with James Caan for a view of that world.

Forget all the government-intrusion heavy remedies, though. The main thing is to open up the API's (not the entire code base) to level the playing field and levy major fines. And forcing a Linux Office?? That just lets MS start to dominate Linux. That's a real help????

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PS: I never worked for MS or WP and am only a semi-professional in this industry, but many people care a great deal about this case.